

National Diet Library Newsletter

No. 194, June 2014

Japanese Studies Support Symposium "What can Japanese libraries do to support Japanese studies outside Japan?"

On January 30, 2014, the Japanese Studies Support Symposium "What can Japanese libraries do to support Japanese studies outside Japan?" was held in the Tokyo Main Library of the National Diet Library (NDL). More than 130 people were in attendance.



<<Audience of the Japanese Studies Support Symposium>>

The program of the Japanese Studies Support Symposium was as follows:

<<Table: Program>>

Part I:

Keynote speech by Dr. Atsuhiko WADA, Professor, Faculty of Education and Integrated Arts and Sciences, Waseda University "Japanese studies outside Japan and role of Japanese libraries – examples of North America and in Southeastern Asia"

Part II:

Panel discussion "What can Japanese Libraries do to support Japanese studies outside Japan?" Panelists:

- Dr. Wada
- Ms. Hyerin JO, librarian, Digital Library Service Division, [National Library of Korea](#)
- Ms. Kuniko YAMADA MCVEY, Librarian for the Japanese Collection of the Harvard-Yenching Library, Chair of the [North American Coordinating Council](#)

[on Japanese Library Resources \(NCC\)](#)

- Ms. Mayumi SHINOZAKI, Senior librarian, Japanese Collection, Asian Collections, [National Library of Australia](#)
- Mr. Toshinori EGAMI, librarian, [International Research Center for Japanese Studies](#)
- Dr. Willy F. VANDE WALLE, Professor, Research Unit of Japanese Studies, Department of Area Studies, Faculty of Arts, Katholieke Universiteit (KU) Leuven

Coordinator: Mr. Ryoichi MINAMI, then-Director, Library Support Division

Dr. Wada gave a keynote speech entitled "Japanese studies and roles of Japanese libraries outside Japan – examples of North America and Southeastern Asia" and reported the situation of Japanese studies and Japanese libraries especially in Southeastern Asia based on his field survey.



<<Keynote speech by Dr. Wada>>

In the panel discussion, each panelist made a brief report on the situation of Japanese studies in a region such as Japan, North America, Australia, Europe and Korea, and the organization they belonged to, introduction of roles played by libraries to support Japanese studies, and what they expected from libraries in Japan. In the following Q&A session, panelists answered questions from the audience.



<<From the left: Dr. Wada, Mr. Egami, Ms. Yamada McVey, Dr. Vande Walle, Ms. Shinozaki and Ms. Jo>>

The symposium presentations made it clear that Japanese studies research overseas was conducted in an increasingly wide range of subjects and methods. Some panelists sharply pointed out that the amount and accessibility of digitized academic resources in Japanese were far too little compared to the similar contents in English, Chinese, and Korean. The JSTOR, a digital library of academic journals in the United States is a good example, and Japanese academic journals in humanities and social sciences are critically lacking this type of e-resource portal.

On the other hand, panelists expressed great appreciation for the NDL digitization project and expectation of its further progress. Some said that more information should be provided in English, while others stated it is more important to provide information on materials in Japanese than in English. The reason for the difference in view depends on the variety of research methods. There was also a comment that enhancement of general support for libraries outside Japan itself would contribute to supporting Japanese studies.

On the basis of the fruitful discussion in this symposium, the NDL is now planning further support for Japanese studies in the future.

Related articles:

- [The Japan Specialist Workshop 2013 Symposium "Why support for overseas Japanese Studies now?"](#) (No. 189, June 2013)
- [Japan Specialist Workshop: Access to the culture and the society of contemporary Japan 2012](#) (No.182, April 2012)
- [Japan Specialist Workshop: Access to the culture and the society of contemporary Japan 2011](#) (No. 177, April 2011)